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The 9 Best Tonic Waters of 2021

Elevate a classic gin and tonic.

Written by Jonah Flicker | Updated 02/26/21



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Tonic water is a key mixer to have in your home bar. After all, it's one half of a classic gin and tonic. The core ingredients are simple: soda water, sugar

America, who used the bark of the cinchona tree for medicinal purposes. Years ^{Advertisement} after this bark was introduced to Europe, quinine was used by British soldiers to treat malaria as they colonized India, leading to the invention of tonic water.

Nowadays, you can find a range of small producers and top brands making variations on tonics. Here are the best tonic waters to try today.

Best Overall: Fever-Tree Indian Tonic Water



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Fever-Tree has a wide range of flavors available, but the classic Indian Tonic Water is one of the best. It's made using quinine from the “fever trees” found in the Democratic Republic of Congo. These trees, which are known as cinchona trees, contain quinine in their bark, which is the source of the bitterness in tonic

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Best Light: Q Mixers Light Tonic Water



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Q Mixers makes a light version of their tonic water, providing the same flavors with only half the calories. The quinine in this tonic comes from cinchona trees in the Peruvian Andes, and this version uses erythritol as a sweetener instead of the agave syrup in the original. Use this tonic water as a mixer if you're concerned about extra calories or sugar in your drinks.

Best for Gin and Tonic: Fentimans Tonic Water

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Fentimans has been “botanical brewing” since the early 20th century and is well known for its spicy ginger beer. Its tonic water is also excellent—botanicals like juniper, makrut lime and lemongrass are infused into the water to complement the floral notes of gin. This makes it perfect for a classic gin and tonic, with the tonic providing an extra burst of herbal flavor to amplify the character of any gin.

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Best for Vodka: Boylan Heritage Tonic



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Vodka is by definition flavorless and odorless (though some brands have more character than others). So, tonic waters with a stronger flavor profile are ideal for making a vodka tonic or any other vodka drink. Boylan Heritage Tonic works well with all types of vodka, thanks to a pronounced citrus flavor from the lemon, key lime and bitter orange extracts. Add a wheel of lemon or lime as a garnish, sit back and enjoy a superior vodka cocktail.

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Best Tonic Syrup: Jack Rudy Classic Tonic Syrup

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Compared to tonic waters, tonic syrups can be kept in the fridge for a long time, and you can increase or decrease the concentration to suit your taste. A great choice is Jack Rudy's Classic Tonic Syrup, a concentrate made from quinine, botanicals and real cane sugar for sweetness. One bottle will yield about 23 servings, give or take. Just add some soda water and your favorite spirit for a satisfying drink.

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Best for Drinking on its Own: Canada Dry Tonic Water

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Tonic water is also a lovely drink on its own, perhaps with a dash of bitters or a squeeze of citrus poured over some ice. Canada Dry's Tonic Water is a simple, accessible option for this purpose. While it might be a bit sweeter than other craft offerings, the quinine bitterness keeps its flavor profile relatively balanced.

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Best Flavored: East Imperial Yuzu Tonic



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profile. Try pairing this with a floral gin instead of a dry one, like Hendricks, The Botanist or any of the new American-style gins. The yuzu is immediately recognizable upon the first sip, bringing a tart, sweet zing that plays nicely with the strong botanicals.

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Best Budget: Schweppes Tonic Water

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Schweppes is a ubiquitous and affordable brand, and its tonic water works well in any drink or on its own. It's sweet, with just a little bitterness from the quinine, and has been used in countless gin and tonics all over the world. All in all, this is a straightforward, readily-available option.

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Best Craft: Top Note Classic Tonic Water

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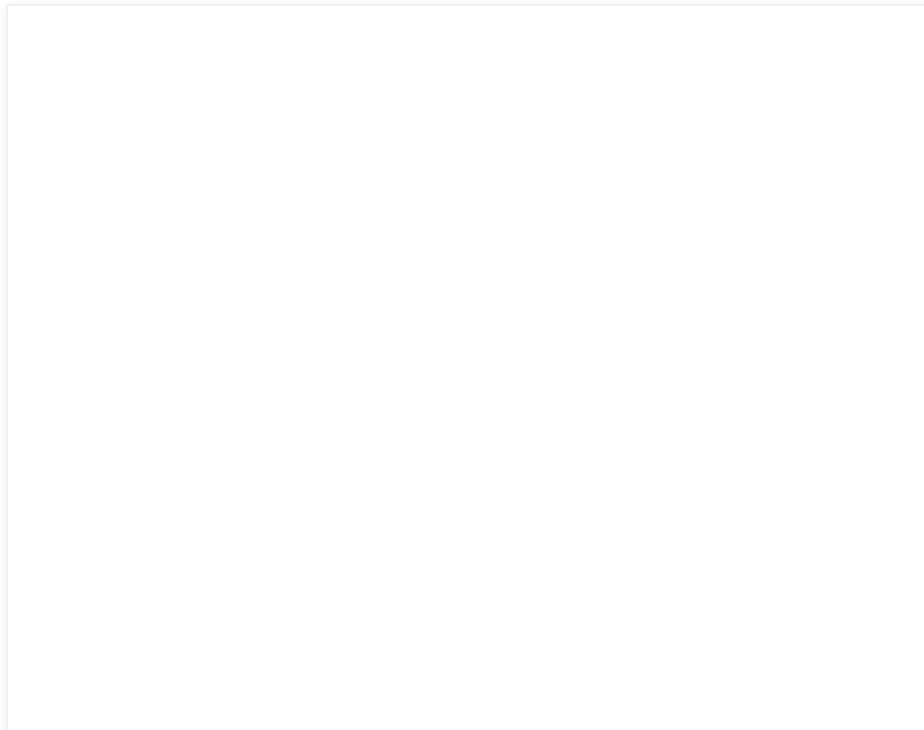
Milwaukee-based Top Note got its start in 2014 and has racked up awards for its eclectic lineup since then. In addition to the grapefruit and lime-flavored Indian Tonic Water (which the brand recommends drinking with coffee) and the more traditional Classic Tonic, the company makes grapefruit soda, ginger beer, bitter lemon and club soda. There may be other brands with a bigger selection of flavors, but Top Note keeps things simple while making products with high-quality ingredients with what they call a "craft brewer's mentality."

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appeared in many different national outlets covering trends, new releases, and the stories and innovators behind the spirits. His first love remains whiskey, but he is partial to tequila, rum, gin, cognac and all things distilled.

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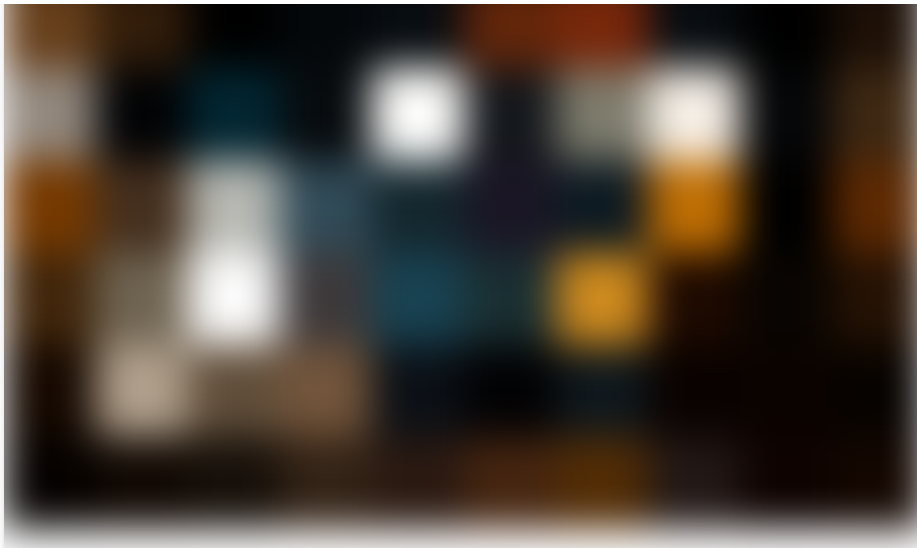
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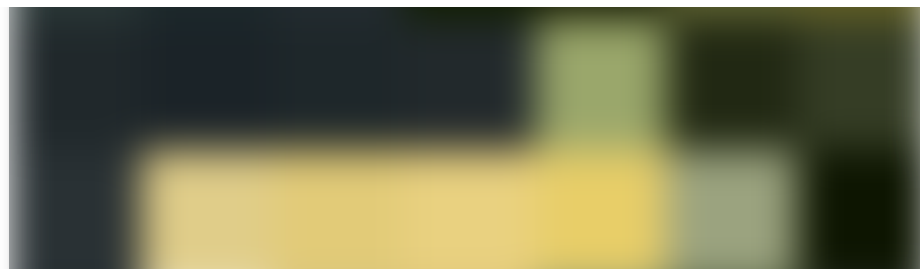
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